

Message Text

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43

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/130 W

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R 191032Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7583

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY SANAA

UNCLAS JIDDA 3511

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SA, YE

SUBJECT: NEW REGIME IN YEMEN

1. SUMMARY. ON JUNE 18 DAILY MEDINA CARRIED FIRST SAUDI PRESS COMMENTARY ON YEMEN EVENTS. PAGE 5 COMMENTARY WAS WRITTEN BY AHMED MOHAMMED MAHMOUD, THE NEWSPAPER'S FOREIGN NEWS EDITOR. HE IS KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY AS A GENERALLY ASTUTE OBSERVER OF THE AREA SCENE. THE THRUST OF HIS ARTICLE IS THAT EVENTS IN THE YEMEN MAY HAVE BEEN ENGINEERED TO PERMIT IRYANI TO RETURN AS PRESIDENT WITH GREATER AUTHORITY THAN PREVIOUSLY. TEXT FOLLOWS. END SUMMARY.

2. QUOTE: PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS IN YEMEN ARE AN INTERNAL YEMENI AFFAIR BUT ONE CAN STILL ANALYZE THE SITUATION EVEN THOUGH IT IS TOO EARLY FOR A DEFINITIVE ANALYSIS.

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" STATEMENTS OF THE NEW LEADERS IN YEMEN CONFIRM THAT

CIVILIANS WILL ASSUME CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THESE STATEMENTS ALSO SHOW THAT THERE WAS A CONFLICT BETWEEN LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE INSTITUTIONS IN YEMEN IN REGARD TO SHARING AUTHORITY.

"THERE ARE TWO TRENDS IN YEMEN: (A) TO RETAIN THE ISLAMIC ADVISORY "SHURA" SYSTEM BY WHICH A DECISION IS REACHED AFTER DEMOCRATIC DISCUSSIONS AND (B) TO ESTABLISH A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM UNDER WHICH ONE PERSON CONTROLS THE STATE AS OPPOSED TO THE FORMER SYSTEM UNDER WHICH A 3-MAN PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL RULED.

"AS A RESULT OF THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN YEMEN, PRESIDENT IRYANI AND OTHER LEADERS HAVE RESIGNED THEIR POSITIONS. IT IS VERY CURIOUS THAT THE NEW LEADERS DO NOT ACCUSE PRESIDENT IRYANI AND THOSE OTHER LEADERS WHEN THEY SPEAK OF FINANCIAL CORRUPTION, BRIBERY AND OTHER GRIEVANCES. THESE ACCUSATIONS OF WRONGDOING ARE NOT DIRECTED AGAINST ONE PERSON, A NUMBER OF PERSONS OR EVEN AGAINST THE FORMER SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

" POSSIBLY THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN YEMEN RESULTED FROM A STALEMATE IN THE CONFLICT BETWEEN VARIOUS HIGH LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES. PERHAPS THE RESIGNATIONS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE WERE PREARRANGED WITH THE THOUGHT THAT THESE PERSONS WOULD RETURN TO OFFICE AFTER THE SITUATION HAD BEEN MODIFIED TO CONFORM TO THEIR OBJECTIVES AND AMBITIONS. THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY COL. MASSOURI CONCERNING A CHANGE OF THE CONSTITUTION, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ONE PARTY, AND THE RULE OF ONE PRESIDENT INSTEAD OF A PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL INDICATES THAT THINGS ARE MOVING TOWARDS THE PREPARATION OF A "SEAT OF RESPONSIBILITY" FOR ONE OF THE PERSONALITIES WHO RECENTLY RESIGNED--A PERSON WHO WAS PRAISED AND NEITHER CRITICIZED NOR ACCUSED OF CORRUPTION, BRIBERY AND INJUSTICE. THIS PERSON MIGHT BE PRESIDENT IRYANI, WHO IS NOW RESTING IN SYRIA.

"IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO SAY WHETHER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WERE DIRECTED AGAINST PRESIDENT IRYANI, AGAINST IBN AL-AHMAR, OR AGAINST ABU LAHUM. IT IS STILL TOO EARLY ALSO UNCLASSIFIED

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TO SAY WHETHER THESE DEVELOPMENTS WILL SERVE THE INTERESTS OF ONE OF THESE PERSONS OR ALL OF THEM.

" PRESIDENT IRYANI MAY BE ASKED TO RESUME THE PRESIDENCY BY THE COMMAND COUNCIL AFTER THINGS HAVE BEEN ARRANGED THE WAY HE WANTS THEM. IRYANI HAS PREVIOUSLY WANTED TO BE PRESIDENT UNDER A CONSTITUTION WHICH DID NOT PROVIDE FOR A PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL.

" THESE THINGS SEEM PARTICULARLY POSSIBLE NOW AFTER
THE COMMAND COUNCIL HAS ASKED THE PERSON THAT IRYANI REGARDS
AS THE MOST FAVORABLE CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTER TO RETURN TO
THE COUNTRY--MUHSIN AL-'AYNI, A LEADING MEMBER OF THE
BAATH PARTY. END QUOTE.
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